

# Press Release



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## **Cumberland Tapped for Inaugural Arts & Entertainment Outstanding Achievement Award**

Baltimore (March 25, 2009) — In recognition of the significant contributions made to Maryland's economy through art and culture, the Cumberland Arts & Entertainment District was presented today with the inaugural ***Outstanding Achievement Award*** by the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED). The award recognizes Cumberland's success in creating innovative marketing strategies that aided in filling downtown vacancies, a successful artist relocation program that drew out-of-state and international artists to the District and involved them in the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings, and the completion of significant capital projects including the Allegany Arts Council and Saville Gallery that opened July 2008. DBED Assistant Secretary Hannah Byron presented the award to Allegany Arts Council Director Andrew L. Vick during the annual meeting of A & E District managers held in Havre de Grace.

"Under the leadership of the Allegany Arts Council, Cumberland has harnessed the power of the arts to attract businesses, encourage economic development and foster civic pride," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "This district is a model for Arts and Entertainment District programs. The promotion of artists and arts events, the strengthening of local cultural enterprises and active community partnerships has resulted in job opportunities and significant contributions to Maryland's economy."

In 2002, Cumberland became one of the first communities designated as an Arts and Entertainment District. It was expanded in 2007 to include a neighborhood targeted for more artist housing.

In accepting the award, Vick commented, "The arts have been one of the key elements of the revitalization of downtown Cumberland. When we bring in artists who renovate buildings we continue to demonstrate what is possible." He added, "Even in challenging financial times, an investment in the arts pays major dividends."

The Outstanding Achievement Award will be presented annually to a district board chair or executive director for excellence in one or more of five areas: marketing, public art, economic development, special events and festivals, and A&E education and outreach.

Maryland's Arts and Entertainment Program was one of the first in the country and since 2001 has grown to include 18 districts located across the state, from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore. The program provides state incentives to help Maryland localities organize special zones that harness the power of their cultural resources. Applications for district designation are accepted annually.

The Arts and Entertainment Program is administered by the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency of the DBED under the direction of the Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts. For information on the program, call Elizabeth Carven at 410-767-6555 or visit [www.msac.org](http://www.msac.org).

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## **CUMBERLAND ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT FACT SHEET**

**Location:** Allegany County  
**Year Authorized:** 2002; Expanded 2007  
**Managing Entity:** Allegany Arts Council, Inc.  
**Website:** [www.alleganyartscouncil.org](http://www.alleganyartscouncil.org)  
**County Size:** 72,594  
**District Size:** 100 Acres

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**Accomplishments:** Marketing/Public Relations:

- Participated in development of City of Cumberland map denoting A/E District
- Produced walking map of A/E District for visitors
- Named Top 25 Small Arts Cities by American Style Magazine
- Implemented advertising campaign in “Sunshine Artist Magazine” – artist recruitment
- Numerous articles on Cumberland artists/art scene – national and local

Economic Development:

- Opened 9 Center Street – new Arts Council office, theater, gallery
- Participated in Canal Place restructuring
- MD Heritage Tax Credits - \$500,000

Special Events & Festivals:

- Arts Walks, Studio Tour, produced music series
- Installed street banners for A/E branding/marketing
- Heritage Days Festival attracted 20,000

Education & Outreach:

- Participated on panels promoting A/E
- Consulted with out-of-state cities on a/e district development
- Hosted tours and on-site education for out-of-state towns/cities and Ontario
- Provided technical assistance to other MD A/E districts

Public Art Projects & Installations:

- Installed Public Art outside of A/E District